



Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

# Forest FEATURES



## *Harold Buresh Forest Service Named National Individual Volunteer of the Year*

**H**arold Buresh volunteers weekend after weekend on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Since 1988, he has worked more than 8,000 hours, 400 average hours annually, and built at least 100 miles of trail. This year the Forest Service named him the Individual Volunteer of the Year for the nation.

He did all this while working 50 hours a week at Cascade Machinery and Electric. "It keeps me out of trouble, or gets me into it," Buresh said about spending most of his free time working in the forest. "I still haven't figured that one out yet," he said. Buresh lives in Kent, Washington. He also volunteers with the Washington Trails Association and Volunteers for Outdoor Washington.

Pat Ellis, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie volunteer coordinator, submitted the nomination. He said Buresh uses his own truck and tools. Ellis praised Buresh's teaching ability and said his knowledge of construction is vast. "He supervises and trains volunteer crews, sharing his experiences and leads by example," Ellis said.

Trail construction is technical. Important considerations Buresh shows volunteers include limiting trail slope to about 15 or 16 percent grade up or down hill, and proper depth, width and slope for drainage. He insists on using the right tool for the right

job with safety his highest priority.

Buresh said good trails keep people on them and off fragile areas. "The further back you go, the narrower and less developed a trail can be, since most hikers only use the first four miles," he said.

"We are constantly beating our brains trying to come up with ways to limit structures on trails and new theories on how to reduce costs," Buresh said. He feels that everyone can help take care of trails. "Flick a stick, kick a rock," he said. "Rocks pose obstacles for passage and a place for water to pool.

Sticks rot in the trail becoming damaging organic material." Plus, he said anyone can pack out garbage left by others.

The Secretary of Agriculture will present the award Aug. 14. "It's a little overwhelming," said Buresh. "I'm really grateful for this recognition."



Photo by Ken Sandusky

*Forest Service volunteer of the year Harold Buresh.*

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